

Message Text

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PAGE 01 DAMASC 04679 151205Z
ACTION NEA-10

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R 151039Z AUG 78
FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
TO USDOC WASHDC
AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY ATHENS
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
INFO SERSTATE WASHDC 9210

UNCLAS DAMASCUS 4679

E.O. 11652: NA
TAGS: BEXP, SY
SUBJECT: PLANNING RECRUITMENT FOR 1979 DAMASCUS
INTERNATIONAL FAIR

1. SUMMARY: IN ORDER TO ORGANIZE RECRUITMENT FOR 1979 DAMASCUS INTL FAIR, WE REVIEWED RECRUITMENT ACTIVITY FOR 1978 FAIR. WE HAVE CONCLUDED THIS YEAR WE MUST: (A) START EARLIER, (B) HIT A WIDER MARKET THAN BEFORE, AND (C) MAKE MORE PERSONAL CONTACTS IN RECRUITING. SYRIAN GOVERNMENT HAS WITHDRAWN IMPORT QUOTA PRIVILEGE, THEREFORE, WE CAN NO LONGER COUNT ON LOCAL MERCHANTS TO CARRY 40-50 PERCENT OF OUR EXPENSES. END SUMMARY.

2. OF TWENTY PARTICIPANTS IN 1978 FAIR, FOUR PARTICIPATED BECAUSE OF SPECIAL IMPORT QUOTA, ELEVEN AS RESULT OF PERSONAL CONTACT BY EMBASSY, AND TWO IN RESPONSE TO BROCHURE. THREE REMAINDER WERE OLD TO MARKET COMPANIES, BUT IN TWO CASES PERSONAL CONTACT PLAYED IMPORTANT ROLE IN PERSUADING THEM TO RETURN. SPECIAL IMPORT QUOTA PRIVILEGE HAS BEEN WITHDRAWN BY SYRIAN GOVERNMENT, SO NONE OF QUOTA COMPANIES CAN BE EXPECTED TO PARTICIPATE
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NEXT YEAR. MAJORITY OF COMPANIES REFUSING TO PARTICIPATE IN 1978 FAIR EXPLAINED THEY HAD INSUFFICIENT TIME TO BUDGET AND PREPARE. ALMOST ALL COMPANIES APPROACHED SPOKE OF REQUIRING MINIMUM OF NINE MONTHS' ADVANCE NOTICE. THUS, WE NEED EOPHASIZE PERSONAL CONTACT AND MAIL PROCUREMENT. PRINCIPAL PROBLEM POOR SHOWING OF BROCHURE MAIL-OUT IN 1978 WAS THAT MOST

BROCHURES WERE RECEIVED TOO LATE TO BE USEFUL. (IN FACT, WE ARE STILL RECEIVING RESPONSES.)

3. EMBASSY WILL BEGIN PREPARING RECRUITMENT BROCHURES IMMEDIATELY, WITH MAILINGS TO BEGIN NLT BEGINNING OF OCTOBER. POST WILL REQUEST FROM USDOC COMPUTER PRINT-OUT OF INDUSTRY ADDRESSES (ON MAILING LABELS) OF TARGET COMPANIES BY SIC NUMBERS. WE HOPE TO MAIL SOME 5000-70000 BROCHURES.

4. PRIMARY TARGET IS ATHENS BUSINESS COMMUNITY. ECONOMIC OFFICER THEROS WISHES TO VISIT ATHENS EARLY SEPTEMBER FOR ROUND OF MEETINGS WITH LOCAL BUSINESSES. HE WOULD TAKE SOME LEAVE LOCALLY AND DO FOLLOW-UP MEETINGS AT END OF LEAVE BEFORE RETURNING TO SYRIA. IF EMBASSY OR AMCONGEN THESSALONIKI REGARD IT AS USEFUL, THEROS WOULD ALSO LIKE TO VISIT FAIR ON BUSINESS DAYS (18-19 SEPT.) TO TALK WITH U.S. FIRMS THAT MAY PARTICIPATE DESPITE ABSENCE OFFICIAL U.S. PAVILION. COMMERCIAL OFFICER MICHAUD WILL BEGIN WORK ON AMMAN BUSINESS COMMUNITY AT SAME TIME.

5. FOR CAIRO AND TEHRAN: DO YOU BELIEVE MISSIONARY WORK AMONG COMPANIES WITH REGIONAL OFFICES IN YOUR CITIES WOULD BE WORTHWHILE? IF SO, WE WOULD LIKE TO SCHEDULE VISIT BY MICHAUD OR THEROS NLT NOV/DEC. OTHER GOOD UNCLASSIFIED

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TARGETS ARE BRUSSELS AND GENEVA-BASED COMPANIES, BUT THAT IS BEYOND OUR MEANS.

6. FOR USDOC: WITH WITHDRAWAL OF QUOTA PRIVILEGE, THIS IS GOING TO BE A HARDER SHOW TO PROCURE. WE WOULD APPRECIATE USDOC MAKING DIRECT APPROACH TO STATE CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE THAT IT DEEMS MAY BE INTERESTED IN HELPING TO SPONSOR STATEWIDE SHOW. (PENNSYLVANIA IS ONE GOOD PROSPECT BECAUSE OF PREVIOUS CONTACTS.) WE WOULD ALSO SUGGEST USDOC APPROACH PUERTO RICO DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE ALONG SAME LINES. (LUMBER INDUSTRY IN LATTER WOULD FIND GOOD MARKET HERE.)

7. COMMERCE AND STATE WILL NOTICE ABSENCE ANY EFFORT TO RUN A SINGLE-THEME SHOW. WE WOULD LIKE TORUN A SINGLE-THEME SHOW, BUT THIS REQUIRES CLOSE COORDINATION WITH USICA (FOR SHOW CENTERPIECE) AND WITH USDOC FOR RECRUITMENT. USICA DAMASCUS HAS ASKED USICA WASHINGTON TO COMMIT THEMSELVES ON CENTERPIECE, EITHER SOLAR ENERGY OR TRANSPORTATION, BY SEPTEMBER 15. (THIS GIVES US TIME TO AMEND OUR BROCHURES ACCORDINGLY.) IF THIS IS DONE, AND IF USDOC IS PREPARED TO ACTIVELY ASSIST IN

STATESIDE RECRUITMENT, A SINGLE-THEME SHOW IS POSSIBLE.
LOCAL PROCUREMENT ALONE, AS SUGGESTED IN MORAL LETTER
JUNE 5, IS NOT POSSIBLE FOR SINGLE-THEME SHOW. LOCAL
PRESENCE U.S. FIRMS IN ANY ONE FIELD IS TOO SMALL AND
EMBASSY LACKS RESOURCES RECRUIT TOO FAR AWAY. SO FAR,
WE HAVE ORAL COMMITMENTS OF COMPANIES IN INDUSTRIAL
TOOLS, AUTOMOTIVE EQUIPMENT, LIGHT CONSTRUCTION

EQUIPMENT AND TRUCKS. IF WE DO MUCH MORE RECRUITING,
WE MAY HAVE PRECLUDED A SINGLE-THEME SHOW ALREADY.
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